

News

United States
Department
of Labor



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**Consumer Price Index for Energy and Food
Cleveland-Akron, OH CMSA
December 2003**

Energy costs in the Cleveland area fell 2.6 percent in December, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Over the past 12 months, however, energy costs were up 12.5 percent following a 7.1 percent gain for the year ended December 2002. The cost of food at home (grocery food) rose 2.3 percent from November and stood only 0.2 percent higher than a year ago. In the previous annual period, December 2001-2002, grocery food prices increased 1.9 percent.

The December decline in energy costs was attributed to a 6.4 percent drop in the gasoline index, commented Acting Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer. Prices at the gasoline pumps declined in each of the last three months of 2003, falling an average 6.0 percent each month. Despite their retreat, gasoline prices remained 5.5 percent above their year-end 2002 level. Among other energy related categories, the electricity index edged up 0.2 percent and stood 0.9 percent below its year ago level. The utility natural gas index was unchanged from November, but was 34.5 percent higher than its year-end 2002 level.

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Scheduled release date for the January 2004 CPI:
Friday, February 20, 2004

CPI HOTLINE PROVIDES LATEST INDEXES 24 HOURS A DAY

The all items CPI's for the U. S. City Average and for the Cleveland area are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the Bureau's CPI Hotline service. This recorded message also provides percent changes from a month ago and from a year ago as well as the scheduled release date for the next CPI issuance. The Hotline number in Cleveland is (216) 522-3852.

BLS FAX-ON-DEMAND SERVICE OFFERS CPI DATA 24 HOURS A DAY

If you have a fax machine and a touch-tone telephone, you can order current and historical CPI data and receive it within minutes by fax. The BLS Fax-on-Demand service offers over 280 documents containing the most popular BLS data including more than 65 documents containing CPI data for the nation, four regions, and 30 metropolitan areas. To receive by fax a catalog of documents available on the service, call 312 353-1880, select menu option 1, and when prompted, order document 1000.

BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE CPI

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPI's for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 87 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 32 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 50,000 housing units and approximately 23,000 retail establishments-- department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index. Prices of food, fuels and a few other items are obtained every month in all 87 location. Prices of most other commodities and services are collected every month in the three largest geographic areas and every other month in other areas. Prices of most goods and services are obtained by personal visits of the Bureau's trained representatives.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Separate indexes are also published by size of city, by region of the country, for cross-classifications of regions and population-size classes, and for 26 local area. Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices among cities, they only measure the average change in prices for each base period.

The index measure prices changes from a designated reference data -1982-84 that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65.

For further details see the BLS Handbook of Methods, Bulletin 2490, April 1997, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods

Cleveland-Akron, OH (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from—		
	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Dec. 2002	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003
Expenditure category						
All items	-	177.6	-	-	-	-
All items (1967=100)	-	569.2	-	-	-	-
Food and beverages	-	181.7	-	-	-	-
Food	-	184.2	-	-	-	-
Food at home	177.4	176.2	180.3	0.2	1.6	2.3
Food away from home	-	198.9	-	-	-	-
Alcoholic beverages	-	155.5	-	-	-	-
Housing	-	175.5	-	-	-	-
Shelter	200.7	200.8	199.0	.2	-.8	-.9
Rent of primary residence ¹	197.0	197.1	197.5	3.0	.3	.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence ^{1 2}	201.4	201.5	201.1	-.2	-.1	-.2
Fuels and utilities	-	157.7	-	-	-	-
Fuels	158.8	153.8	154.0	17.8	-3.0	.1
Gas (piped) and electricity ¹	161.1	155.9	156.0	18.0	-3.2	.1
Electricity ¹	124.5	124.3	124.6	-.9	.1	.2
Utility natural gas service ¹	200.9	190.6	190.6	34.5	-5.1	.0
Household furnishings and operations	-	122.6	-	-	-	-
Apparel	-	118.5	-	-	-	-
Transportation	-	160.7	-	-	-	-
Private transportation	-	161.1	-	-	-	-
Motor fuel	157.0	149.8	140.3	5.5	-10.6	-6.3
Gasoline (all types)	155.9	148.7	139.2	5.5	-10.7	-6.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular ³	150.9	144.3	134.1	5.9	-11.1	-7.1
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ^{3 4}	158.3	150.7	142.1	4.6	-10.2	-5.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium ³	154.1	146.0	140.6	4.5	-8.8	-3.7
Medical care	-	263.0	-	-	-	-
Recreation ⁵	-	100.2	-	-	-	-
Education and communication ⁵	-	105.5	-	-	-	-
Other goods and services	-	282.0	-	-	-	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	-	177.6	-	-	-	-
Commodities	-	152.9	-	-	-	-
Commodities less food and beverages	-	136.3	-	-	-	-
Nondurables less food and beverages	-	154.5	-	-	-	-
Durables	-	112.7	-	-	-	-
Services	-	203.0	-	-	-	-
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	-	173.6	-	-	-	-
All items less shelter	-	170.2	-	-	-	-
Commodities less food	-	137.0	-	-	-	-
Nondurables	-	168.6	-	-	-	-
Nondurables less food	-	154.1	-	-	-	-
Services less rent of shelter ²	-	208.9	-	-	-	-
Services less medical care services	-	198.7	-	-	-	-
Energy	157.7	151.7	147.8	12.5	-6.3	-2.6
All items less energy	-	182.4	-	-	-	-
All items less food and energy	-	181.9	-	-	-	-

¹ This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series converted to a geometric means estimator in January, 1999.

² Index is on a December 1982=100 base.

³ Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

⁴ Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

⁵ Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.

Regions defined as the four Census regions. See map in technical notes.